

CHARD RURAL DISTRICT

-- in the --

COUNTY OF SOMERSET.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR THE YEAR

ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 1942.

TO: THE CHARD RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present a short Report on the Sanitary Conditions of the Chard Rural District for the Year ended 31st December, 1942.

Another War year has passed with again remarkably little falling off of the standard of health in the area, if indeed there has been any worth mentioning. The usual outbreak of Influenza and Febrile Catarrh which one expects in the early months of the year was limited to a period of about six weeks and the cases were not so many or as severe as is usual at this season.

Amongst Notifiable Infectious Disease I am again pleased to report a considerable diminution in the number of cases generally over the previous year, and I should like especially to call your attention to the fact that there were no cases of Diphtheria notified during 1942 as against 14 cases and 2 deaths in 1941. I will admit, however, that 1941 was an exceptionally unfortunate year as regards Diphtheria for this District. Although it is still early to draw conclusions I cannot help thinking we are already beginning to reap the benefit of Diphtheria Immunisation of children in the area.

There was a small outbreak of Acute Poliomyelitis in the area, four cases in all being notified. These occurred during the period when several cases occurred in one of the towns in the area. All of the cases received suitable after treatment, three of them being removed to the South Somerset Isolation Hospital and afterwards to Bath Orthopaedic Hospital. There was one death.

The following is a list of Notifiable Infectious Diseases.

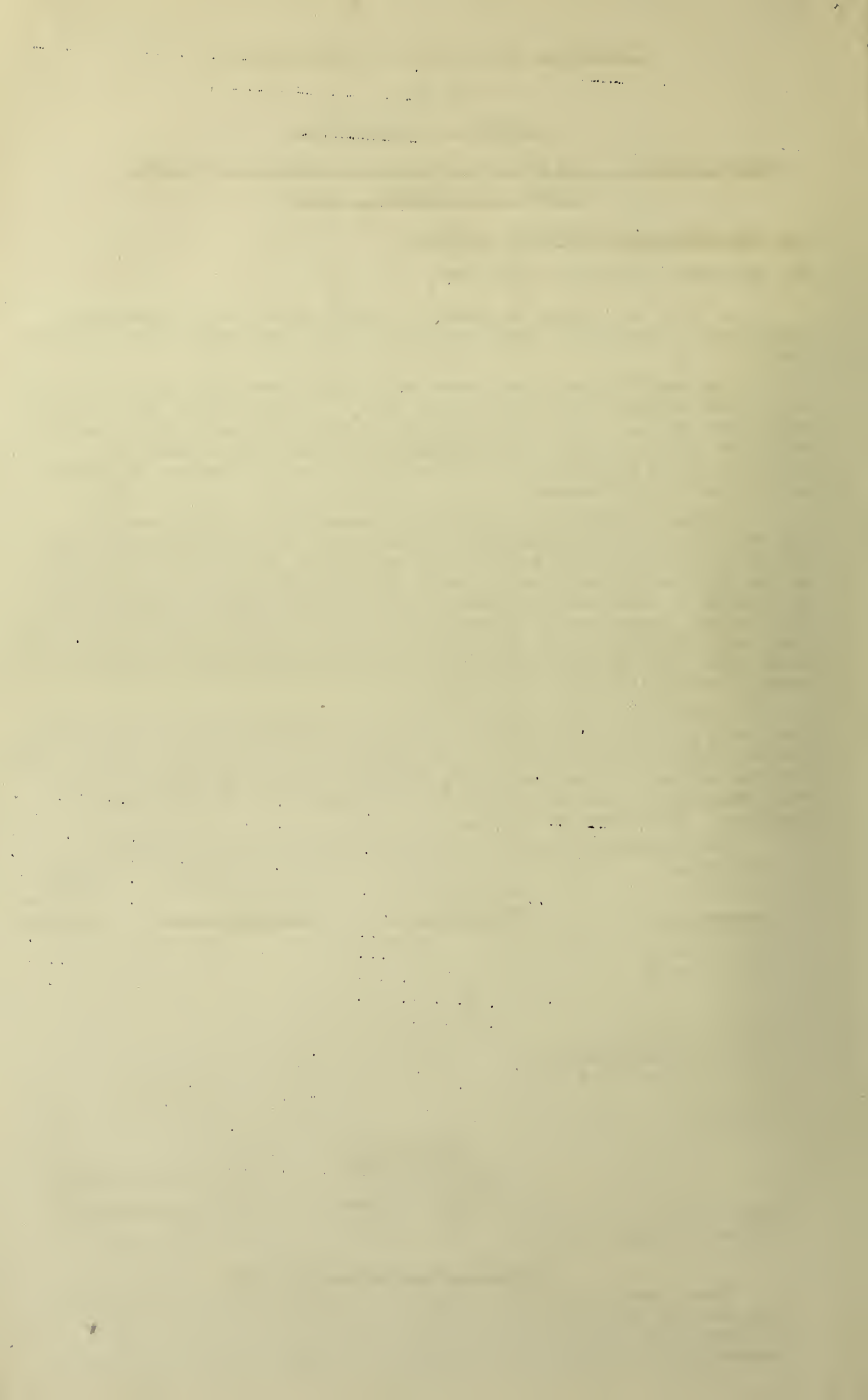
Disease.	Total number of cases notified.	Cases admitted to Isolation Hospital.	Total Deaths.
Scarlet Fever .....	8 .....	2 .....	-
Diphtheria .....	- .....	- .....	-
Enteric Fever .....	- .....	- .....	-
Measles .....	5 .....	1 .....	-
Whooping Cough .....	13 .....	- .....	-
Puerperal Pyrexia .....	3 .....	1 .....	-
Ophthalmia Neonatorum ...	- .....	- .....	-
Acute Poliomyelitis .....	4 .....	3 .....	1
Chicken-pox .....	1 .....	- .....	-
Erysipelas ... ..	1 .....	- .....	-

TUBERCULOSIS.

	Total number of cases notified.	Total Deaths.
Respiratory .....	12 .....	5
Non-Respiratory .....	1 .....	1

HOSPITAL AND HEALTH SERVICES.

These remain essentially unaltered except that the Seavington Sick Bay was closed as such and re-opened as a Children's Hostel. Cases of Scabies have occurred sporadically during the year, and some accommodation has been made available at Chaffcombe Sick Bay for the



treatment of families who are affected in addition to the ordinary beds in the Sick Bay. A Treatment Centre for this and the adjoining areas is needed, however, for this purpose.

<u>BIRTHS.</u>			
<u>LIVE BIRTHS.</u>			
		<u>Male.</u>	<u>Female.</u>
Legitimate ...	...	98	94
Illegitimate ...	...	5	6
	<u>Total</u>	<u>103</u>	<u>100</u>

<u>STILLBIRTHS.</u>		
	<u>Total</u>	
	5	4

<u>DEATHS.</u>		
Deaths from all causes:	55	84

<u>CAUSES OF DEATH.</u>			
<u>Cause of Death.</u>			
Tuberculosis of			
Respiratory System ...	2		3
Other forms of Tuberculosis	1		-
Influenza ...	1		1
Acute Poliomyelitis ...	1		-
Cancer ...	5		18
Diabetes ...	-		1
Intercranial Vascular Lesions	6		9
Heart Disease ...	14		18
Other Circulatory Diseases	2		5
Bronchitis ...	2		-
Pneumonia ...	1		6
Other Respiratory Diseases	1		1
Stomach Ulcer ...	-		1
Appendicitis ...	-		1
Other Digestive Diseases	-		2
Nephritis ...	3		6
Suicide ...	-		1
Road Traffic ...	2		-
Other violent causes ...	1		-
All other causes ...	13		11
	<u>Total</u>	<u>55</u>	<u>84</u>

Deaths of Infants under 1 year - 1 male.

#### WATER SUPPLIES.

There were no important changes in water supplies during the year, but a number of connections were made in spite of labour difficulties.

#### SEWAGE DISPOSAL.

General maintenance work was carried out as far as the staff situation allowed. No new work was put in hand during the year.

#### HOUSING.

There is still an insufficiency of housing accommodation in the District and owners of property are finding it increasingly difficult to carry out necessary repairs. The result is that a number of the older cottages are now reverting to a condition that will bring them within



the scope of a Demolition Order when conditions again approach the normal.

Isolated cases of overcrowding have been found during the year, but generally conditions from this point of view are fairly satisfactory.

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF.

This consisted of myself as part-time Medical Officer of Health, Mr. Eric Whisker, Sanitary Inspector, and Mr. L. J. Pattemore as Temporary Additional Sanitary Inspector and Housing Inspector. Labour problems were frequently difficult with increasing calls on the staff in regard to Water Supplies, Salvage, etc.

I am, Mr. Chairman, Ladies & Gentlemen,  
Yours faithfully,

(sd) C. C. COURT, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.

Medical Officer of Health,  
Chard Rural District.

26th July, 1943.



